



Photos by **Scott Terrell** / Skagit Valley Herald

**Children at the Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Station** in Mount Vernon put the finishing touches on a mural Saturday morning. The mural is a depiction of the field trips the children took this year through the Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Kids program.

# Kulshan Creek kids celebrate

## Mural depicts trips neighborhood kids took

By **TREVOR PYLE**  
Staff Writer

**MOUNT VERNON** — For four years, the Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Kids program has helped children in Mount Vernon explore nature, whether it's learning more about the rich farmlands of Skagit Valley or running through a meadow near Baker Lake.

On Saturday, some of the kids who have participated in the program got to create a work of art about all the things they've seen.

The children created a mural that will be unveiled outside the Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Station next month. Following a drawing already done for them, the children painted in a colorful mural stocked with everything from red tulips

to orange fish.

The mural includes squares of fertile farmland, squat red farmhouses and animal life, with the Skagit River cleaving down its middle.

Koreena Haynes, a coordinator for the program and a U.S. Forest Service employee, said the children became excited about creating the artwork once they began working on it.

"They really jumped into it," she said.

The Kulshan Creek program started in summer 2007 as a partnership between the Mount Vernon Police Department, North Cascades National Park, the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and the North Cascades Institute. It helps area youths get more exposure to nature with monthly field trips.



After painting the mural, children put their handprints and signatures on a wall at the Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Station. Chase Cuizon, 9, shows off his painted hand while Emiliano Victoria-Reyes, 9, laughs.

See video on [gorskagit.com](http://gorskagit.com)

Eleven-year-old Sarahy Cruz said she got involved with the program when it organized an eagle-watching trip.

"I like seeing animals I haven't seen before," she said.

Mount Vernon Police Officer Jon Gerondale is Kulshan's neighborhood resource officer and helped start the program.

He noted that next year's program will have separate sessions for younger and older kids, with activities tailored more to their age ranges.

The mural will be unveiled Dec. 4 at the Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Station.

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